

## Message Text

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21

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 OMB-01 AID-05 SAB-01 SAM-01 /097 W

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R 271052Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8806

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

UNCLAS CAIRO 13006

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR EG SY

SUBJECT: CAIRO PRESS ON SYRIAN DEVELOPMENTS

1. CAIRO PRESS DEC 26 AND 27 GIVES PROMINENT COVERAGE TO SYRIAN DEVELOPMENTS. ALL PAPERS DEC 26 HEADLINE ARREST OF 300 COMMUNISTS IN SYRIA FOLLOWING ESCAPE FROM COUNTRY OF SYRIAN CP LEADER KHALED BEKDASH. BEKDASH'S ARRIVAL IN PRAGUE REPORTED IN GUMHURRIYA DEC 27. AKHRAM DEC 26 REPORTS ERUPTION SERIOUS DIFFERENCES IN SYRIAN BAATH PARTY OVER PRES ASSAD'S PROPOSED VISIT TO IRAN, WHICH REGARDED BY SOME AS INCONSISTENT WITH BAATHIST POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY. BOTH GUMHURRIYA AND AKHBAR DEC 26, IN FRONT PAGE REPORTS ON SYRIAN DEVELOPMENTS, CONSTRUE SYRIAN REQUEST FOR US FOOD AID AND DIVERSIFICATION OF US-SYRIAN TRADE AS SIGN OF SHIFT IN SYRIAN POLICY TOWARD COOPERATION WITH US.

2. PAGE ONE COLUMN BY ALI AMIN IN AKHBAR EL YOM DEC 27 SAYS THAT GRAVE SPLIT HAS OCCURRED BETWEEN PRES. ASSAD  
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AND CERTAIN GROUP WITHIN SYRIAN BAATH PARTY. ONE REASON

FOR SPLIT, ACCORDING TO AMIN, WAS ASSAD'S DECISION TO  
WITHDRAW FROM LEBANON. COMMUNISTS JOINED THIS GROUP IN  
IT OPPOSITION TO ASSAD, AND LEAFLETS ATTACKING ASSAD  
WERE DISTRIBUTED IN SYRIA; BUT SYRIAN PEOPLE "RALLIED  
BEHIND SYRIAN PRESIDENT." IT THEN BECAME APPARENT, SAYS  
AMIN, THAT SASSAD OPPOSED SYRIAN INTERVENTION IN LEBANON,  
WHICH TOOK PLACE BEHIND HIS BACK, FROM BEGINNING. AMIN  
CONCLUDES THAT TALKS IN PROGRESS BETWEEN PRES ASSAD  
AND KING KHALED ARE EXPECTED "BY WELL INFORMED CIRCLES"  
TO PLAY KEY ROLE IN STOPPING FIGHTING IN LEBANON.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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